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Report of the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its forty-first session (see E/2010/24, chap. I.A), the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics, which is presented to the Commission for information. The report describes the activities of the Oslo Group in 2009-2010, including the main findings of the fourth and fifth meetings, the contributions to the international recommendations for energy statistics and the future activities of the Group. The Commission is requested to take note of the report.

* E/CN.3/2011/1.

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Report of the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics

I. Background

1. The Oslo Group on Energy Statistics is a city group created by the Statistical Commission to address methodological issues related to energy statistics and contribute to improved international standards and improved methods for official energy statistics.

2. The Group was established in 2006 on the basis of the issues discussed in the report of the programme reviewer (Statistics Norway) on energy statistics (E/CN.3/2005/3), prepared for the thirty-sixth session of the Statistical Commission, and the recommendations of the ad hoc expert group on energy statistics convened in New York from 23 to 25 May 2005 (see E/CN.3/2005/10).

3. Part of the mandate of the Oslo Group is to review and contribute to the revision of the United Nations handbooks and manuals. In support of this revision process, the Intersecretariat Working Group on Energy Statistics was created with the objective of facilitating the institutional coordination among various organizations active in energy statistics.

4. The mandate of the Oslo Group is contained in annex I.

II. Activities of the Oslo Group in 2009 and 2010

A. Meetings of the Oslo Group

5. Information about the three first meetings of the Oslo Group can be found in the two previous reports of the Oslo Group to the Statistical Commission at its thirty-eighth (see E/CN.3/2007/20) and fortieth (see E/CN.3/2009/5) sessions.

6. The fourth meeting of the Oslo Group was held in Ottawa from 2 to 6 February 2009 and was hosted by Statistics Canada. The meeting focused on the drafting process for the international recommendations for energy statistics (IRES) and was extended from the normal three to five days to give adequate time for a discussion of principles for the content of IRES. After discussions on all the chapters of the draft IRES, countries and organizations volunteered to contribute to the drafting of the new manual.

7. The fifth meeting of the Oslo Group was held in Cork, Ireland, from 1 to 4 February 2010 and was co-hosted by the Central Statistical Office Ireland and Sustainable Energy Ireland. The meeting was dedicated to the review of the first draft of IRES which was prepared by the United Nations Statistics Division and drafting teams consisting of representatives of member countries, based on the work of the Group and taking into account the format and structure of other international recommendations approved by the Statistical Commission for other areas of basic economic statistics.

B. International recommendations for energy statistics

8. The main activities of the Oslo Group in 2009 and 2010 have been related to the revision of the United Nations manuals on energy statistics, continuing previous activities initiated in 2008. Drafting and preparation of IRES has been the main focus. A worldwide consultation was held on the provisional draft in mid-2010. Responses indicated overall strong support for the draft. Members of the Oslo Group took an active part in the process at meetings, as well as through electronic contributions and exchange of opinions.

III. Coordination with other Groups

9. Representatives of the London Group on Environmental Accounting have attended the meetings of the Oslo Group, and vice versa. The chairs of the two groups have worked together on coordination in order to prevent misunderstandings and duplications of work. Issues discussed by the London Group that are closely related to the work of the Oslo Group include assets and reserves; both groups focus on defining users' needs in terms of environmental and economic accounting related to energy statistics.

10. The Chair of the Oslo Group participates in the United Nations Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting. The provisional draft of IRES was presented at the Committee's meeting in June 2010.

11. The Intersecretariat Working Group on Energy Statistics is working towards common definitions, units and conversion factors for energy for use by international organizations. The Working Group, together with the Oslo Group, has been a key content provider for IRES in accordance with the mandate given to it by the Statistical Commission. During 2009 and 2010 the Chair and secretariat of the Oslo Group attended the meetings of the Working Group.

12. The Chair of the Oslo Group also participated in several meetings of the Expert Group on Resource Classification, hosted by the Economic Commission for Europe.

IV. Future activities of the Oslo Group

A. Preparation of the Energy Statistics Compilers Manual

13. The main activity for the Oslo Group in 2011 will be related to the drafting of chapters of the Energy Statistics Compilers Manual. The Manual is intended to assist energy statistics compilers in the implementation of the international recommendations for energy statistics, the forthcoming System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for Energy and with other uses within the context of national accounts.

14. The focus of the Manual is on compilation and reporting of energy statistics, both nationally and internationally. It will contain descriptions of good country practices and additional technical information relevant to all the tasks that energy statistics managers and compilers normally perform, from legal and institutional settings and data collection from various sources to data compilation, assessment of

quality and dissemination. The Manual is planned to be a forward-looking document with respect to the development and implementation of the integrated approach to compilation of basic statistics, enabling countries to collect data once and use them many times for various purposes.

15. The practice on compilation of energy statistics is constantly evolving. Therefore, in addition to the publication of the Energy Statistics Compilers Manual in hard copy, an electronic version will be developed and periodically updated to reflect the new methodological developments, keep the compilers abreast of good country practices and channel any new technical information to them.

16. The Energy Statistics Compilers Manual is planned to be finalized by 2013.

B. Best practices

17. The identification and collection of national and international best practices are part of the Oslo Group's mandate. It is envisaged that several sections of the Energy Statistics Compilers Manual will describe good country practices. Those sections will elaborate on issues such as institutional arrangements, data compilation, construction of energy indicators, quality assurance programmes, etc.

18. The Manual will elaborate technical details and provide examples of good country practices for various stages of the data compilation process, including discussion of and guidance on what kinds of data sources can be used and how to make improvements in this area. How to better reflect energy statistics requirements in economic censuses, in regular programmes of enterprise/establishment surveys, in household surveys and mixed household-enterprise surveys will also be discussed.

19. A separate section is envisaged for the description of good country practices in the design and organization of statistical surveys dedicated to the collection of energy data. The issue of frequency of surveys will be illustrated by country examples.

20. The methods used in data validation and editing, imputation and estimation and their specificity in energy statistics will be described and necessary examples provided. The Manual will also contain examples of an integrated approach to the compilation of energy statistics in several countries. Good practices in the use of administrative data sources and merging such data with data received via statistical surveys will be described.

21. A template developed as a tool for the collection of best practices is accessible through the Oslo Group's website (http://og.ssb.no, registration required).

C. Sixth meeting of the Oslo Group

22. The sixth meeting of the Oslo Group will be held in Canberra in May 2011 and will be hosted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The meeting will be dedicated to the issues to be addressed in the Energy Statistics Compilers Manual and the drafting of chapters. The meeting will also focus on cooperation with other groups and on the collection of national and international best practices.

Annex I

Mandate of the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics

The Oslo Group on Energy Statistics is to address issues related to energy statistics and contribute to improved international standards and improved methods for official energy statistics by pooling expertise in the energy community.

Actions:

- To identify users' needs
- To define the scope of official energy statistics
- To identify and collect national and international best practices
- To review and contribute to the updating of United Nations handbooks and manuals on energy statistics
- To identify gaps in coverage (e.g. fuel types, flows) and to develop methodologies to cover gaps
- To adopt links or develop bridges to international standard concepts and classifications in economic/environment statistics to facilitate the integration and interface of energy statistics with other statistical systems
- To recommend a core set of tables as minimum requirements at the national and international level to satisfy major user needs

Annex II

Members of the Oslo Group

A total of 23 countries or areas and 5 international organizations were represented at the meetings of the Oslo Group and expressed their interest in participating in the work of the Group.

Countries

Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Canada, China, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greenland, India, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russian Federation, South Africa, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Yemen.

Organizations

Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat), International Atomic Energy Agency, International Energy Agency, International Monetary Fund (statistical departments) and United Nations Statistical Division.

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http://og.ssb.no, registration required